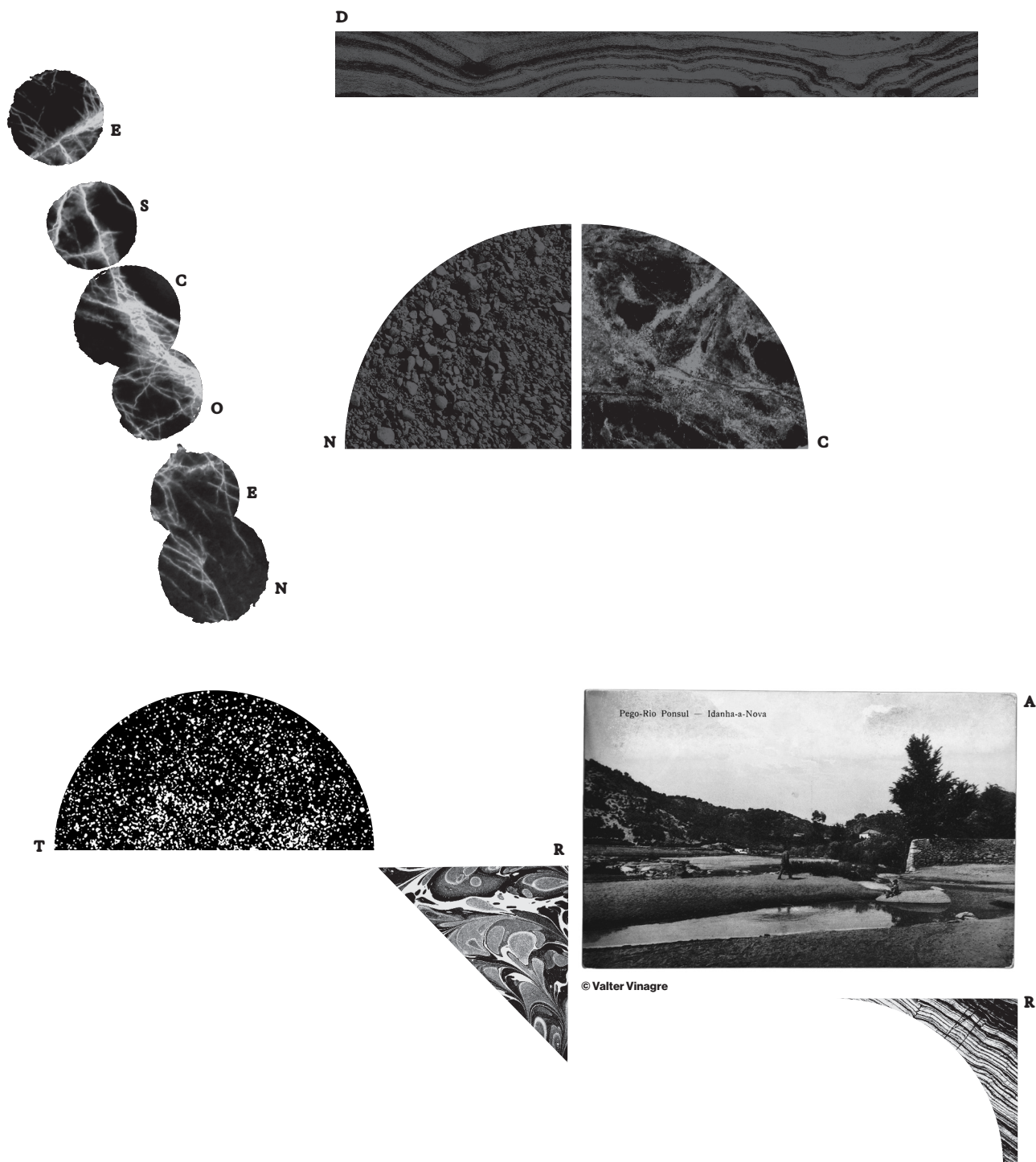


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HOUSE OF NOVELTIES

WORKS FROM CGD COLLECTION



*(cycle **DESCONCENTRATE**)

João Francisco Reis (curator)

**Adriana João,
Inês Mendes Leal,
Adufeiras do Rancho Etnográfico de Idanha-a-Nova** (artists-in-residence)

**Francisco Tropa,
Jimmie Durham** (artists in the CGD)

Centro Cultural Raiano (works)

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EXHIBITION

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Artists-in-residence
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**Adufeiras do Rancho
Etnográfico de Idanha-a-Nova**
Inês Mendes Leal

Artists of the CGD Collection
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Sara Coelho
Sérgio Hydalgo
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The *Desconcentrate* cycle brings together activities focused on artistic creation and production in the field of visual arts, taking place in low population density areas, namely: Caramulo, Idanha-a-Nova, Abrantes, and Guarda.

People of Idanha!

Lose yourselves in this grand showcase that is the House of Novelties!

The birds sing at the break of day.

Tch-tch-tch-tch!

A little after the beginning of the last century, in 1905, Christiano Pereira Barata, a merchant from Alcains working in this wonderful land of Idanha-a-Nova, founded his shop. *The Casa da Novidades* [House of Novelties] became a symbol of the proliferation of trades by its creator, who carried a cosmopolitan spirit reminiscent of the great European capitals. This man “issued banknotes, was an insurance agent, and sold everything from cereals to state gunpowder, petroleum, office supplies, stamps, hardware, liqueurs, Port wine, glasses and binoculars, hats, tobacco, and sewing machines. And, for his final customers, funeral items.”

He was also one of the founders of the Idanha Philharmonic in 1888.

Let the visitor not be shy — this is not a history lesson. We simply use this humble *House of Novelties* as a starting point for the headfirst dive into the fantastical journey that follows. You see, having artists working on these lands of Idanha becomes complex when they begin to distort reality, and we can no longer tell whether we’re starting from true facts or entering deep speculation.

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Guidelines for Visiting the Exhibition:

1. Please note that the artists have spent the last three months sleeping in the corridors of this place.
2. There is no set order or specific path for visiting the rooms — you are invited to explore them as you wish.
3. Whenever you’re unsure whether a work refers to a real experience or if an object is simply a clever appropriation of Idanha’s stories, return to the point below.
4. Don’t be fooled by the narrator — more often, he’s the one who most wants you to get lost.

Tune in to the hum of thousands of mosquitoes slowly echoing through one of the rooms.

Tch-tch-tch-tch!

**Good evening, my friend, who labors all day long.
If tomorrow you're with me, you'll bring me great joy.**

Good evening to those, at home or in hospital, who pray to God — for only God holds the cure for their pain.

Good evening to those who, with will and toil, draw from the land the bread we all shall eat.

Good evening, driver, who spends the day seated, mastering the engine, driving with care.

Good evening, tenacious doctor, who in constant pursuit pushes death away and gives life to the sick.

Good evening to those who waste away in prison, always hoping someone will grant them forgiveness.

To the woman who kisses her child's face so tenderly, Rádio Clube de Monsanto wishes a good evening.

Good evening to those who pray for our sins, pleading with God our Father for them to be forgiven.

To those who are unemployed and to locals without work, we offer from the heart a good night filled with love.

Good night to the working class, who in factories or workshops earn their bitter bread, for the wages are small.

Good night to the broadcaster, on radio or television, who speaks words of value without knowing to whom they go.

Good night to those who spend their entire youth studying, so that books may become their career.

Good night to the man in uniform — you deserve our love. Whether firefighter or soldier, you are our protector.

Good night to those consumed by the pain of others, who fight for peace and for the well-being of those who are hungry.

Good night, teacher — you deserve our affection. You are the student's guide, strengthening their mind.

Good night, shopkeeper — your business keeps moving forward. To keep life going, you pay your taxes.

Rádio Monsanto wishes everyone, with equal love, that the night ahead be spent in the holy peace of the Lord.

In tribute to teacher Joaquim Manuel da Fonseca.

The elders say that beyond Cabeço Monteiro, even before that other gentleman ordered the construction of the dam, a great creature roamed the fields and valleys.

Rarely seen by locals, this being fed on small creatures. More than once, farmers and shepherds would wake before dawn to find their animals pierced through.

Some say it still wanders around, and some have even tried to capture it on film. Some claim it's just a trick, while others believe the footage truly shows this giant.

Mr. Rêgo, with his wide-brimmed farmer's hat, was captured by the lens of a photographer who promised to preserve his youth — or what remained of it — in the print he vowed to make of his face. Snake oil salesman or not, the man agreed to be photographed for posterity. To us, it recalls a Victorian tale that didn't end well for its protagonist, where narcissism and corruption prevailed.

Among the shop windows and display cases left behind by Christiano Pereira Barata after the closing of the Casa das Novidades, one was lost in Idanha-a-Nova. Discovered during an expedition to the abandoned old cinema of Idanha, it now stands in the exhibition as an archaeological marker of what remains of such an honorable establishment. The artist used it as a showcase for her album — a blend of borderland sounds with a taste for electronic music, more specifically experimental and folk music. Pay close attention to the sounds of the renowned *adufe* [frame drum], or the more sober *viola beiroa* [traditional Portuguese 10-string guitar from the Beira region], mixed with the talents of violin and piano.

It is told by many and known by few that a small water pot found in these lands holds magical properties. Sheltered within this Cultural Centre, the little vessel — painted and repainted — has been restored from generation to

generation. Sources say that much like the beautiful Gioconda was stolen from the great French museum, this container has been snatched so many times that it has passed through more than fifty owners.

The water from the Penha Garcia mill echoes the sound of the first room for a brief moment. Tch-tch-tch-tch!

On the Fossil Route in Penha Garcia stands the Miller's House, surrounded by traces of a distant past. Around it, the ichnofossils preserve the memory of the tracks left by trilobites and other marine creatures that once lived here, when around 240 million years ago, an ocean covered these lands. Further along, the path leads us to the small millers' houses — modest spaces, less than 20 m², where a family of five once found shelter. Inside, everyday objects remain silent witnesses

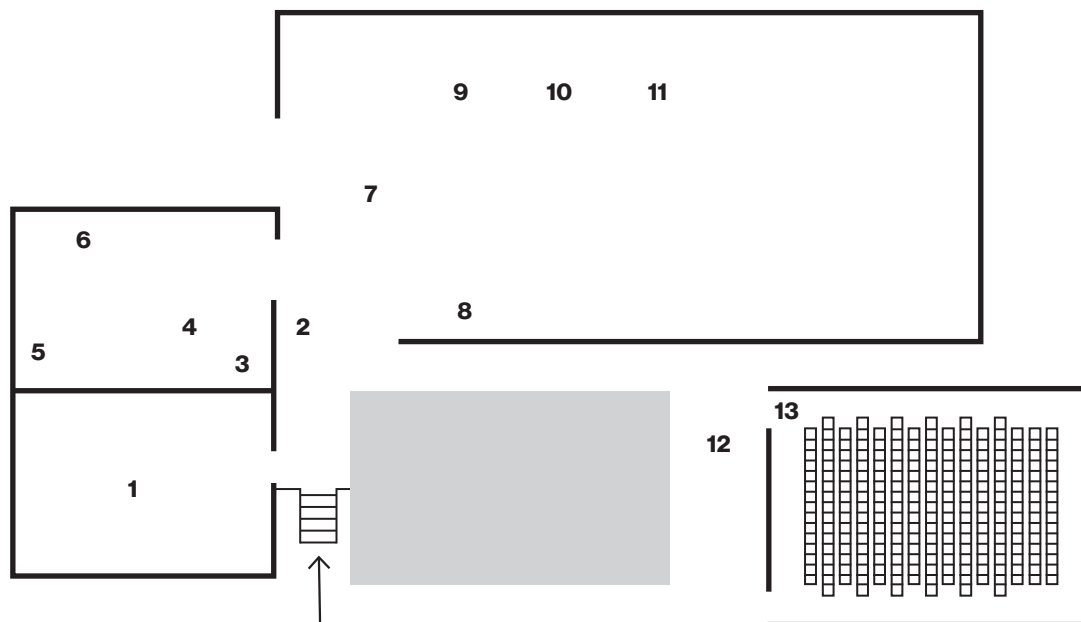
of past lives, many whose purpose is now lost to us. Yet among them, I discovered a few that seemed to be percussion instruments. It was at that moment that I met the guardian of this place, who told me about Dona Fátima, the miller's wife, now deceased. Dona Fátima, passionate about the adufe and percussion, transformed long winters and moments of solitude into times of creation. Using simple materials, she shaped unique instruments, naming them with words born from the sayings of this borderland region. Today, these instruments find new life at the Centro Cultural

Raiano, where the Adufeiras [traditional Portuguese square drum players] of the Ethnographic Group of Idanha-a-Nova interpret them, weaving them into the repertoire of Idanha-a-Nova in tribute to Dona Fátima. And to the sound of this music, we understand the urgency of preserving what has been passed down to us: objects, sounds, knowledge and practices that, without living memory, become lost in time. Because telling these stories is also a way of continuing the voices that are no longer with us.

Chronicle by Inês Mendes Leal

Between summer journeys in search of water wells during her residency, one of the artists recorded the moments she experienced. These encounters by lakes, rocks, and puddles became opportunities to meet the prestigious fauna and flora of the Raia region. It's a true calling card for Idanha's prestidigitation! Are we looking at a cliff? A wooden trunk? Or a precious stone? Reflections become small flashes that light up any viscous liquid. The fogged-up interior of a vehicle. A web.

The bell of Idanha-a-Velha rings one last time for its inhabitants.
Tch-tch-tch-tch! Don't be fooled — you are the one who controls the entire narrative of this intriguing installation. I repeat, don't be fooled.



1 **INÊS MENDES LEAL**
Raia (2025)
4 LP records, 4 turntables,
and 4 stage monitors.
10'00", variable dimensions
Courtesy of the artist

2 **INÊS MENDES LEAL**
*Bem baja Rádio Clube
de Monsanto* (2025)
200 x 160 x 92 cm
Courtesy of the artist

3 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
cristais de vento (2025)
Ink jet print on Photrag
Ultrasmooth 350g paper
150 x 200 cm
Courtesy of the artist

4 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
vêu d'água (2025)
Ink jet print on Photrag
Ultrasmooth 350g paper
200 x 150 cm
Courtesy of the artist

5 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
prata púrpura (2025)
Ink jet print on Photrag
Ultrasmooth 350g paper
100 x 150 cm
Courtesy of the artist

6 **INÊS MENDES LEAL**
Sons de Dona Fátima (2025)
HD video projection, speakers,
02'17", trusses, and percussion
instruments

Cobra Rasteira
Wood and rope

Barburinho
Wood, pegs, and strings from
a *viola beiroa* [traditional
Portuguese 10-string guitar
from the Beira region]

Abêbera
Wood and rope

Espanta Morcegos
Wood, leather, and chestnuts

O Vivo
Cowbells, metal, and leather

Sopra
Wood and raw fabric

Variable dimensions
Courtesy of the artist

7 *Pote de água (asado)* (1950s)
Ceramics (Zebreira Pottery)
Inv. O/R.178
Centro Cultural Raiano
Collection

8 **JIMMIE DURHAM**
Untitled (1997)
Silkscreen on tissue
99,5 x 152 cm
Inv. 563811
Caixa Geral de Depósitos
Collection

9 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
seda oracular (2025)
Ink jet print on Photrag
Ultrasmooth 350g paper
200 x 150 cm
Courtesy of the artist

10 *Abrigo do pastor* (Anos 70)
Wood, iron, slatted wood
with zinc sheet cladding
Inv. PAST.342
Centro Cultural Raiano
Collection

11 **FRANCISCO TROPA**
Gigante (2006)
16mm film, color, silent
10'30"
Inv. 653560
Caixa Geral de Depósitos
Collection
Digitized copy by the
Cinemateca Portuguesa –
Museu do Cinema, as part
of the Plano de Recuperação
e Resiliência. Measure
integrated into the Next
Generation EU program.

12 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
Pearl of Flames (2025)
Rotating display case,
100 CDs released by the artist
Courtesy of the artist

13 **ADRIANA JOÃO**
Pearl of Flames (2025)
Sound, 36'00"
Courtesy of the artist

Concerto de Adriana João
Jardim Interior

Concert by the Adufeiras
[traditional Portuguese
square drum players] of the
Ethnographic Group of Idanha-
-a-Nova with Adriana João
and Inês Mendes Leal
Agriculture Hal